

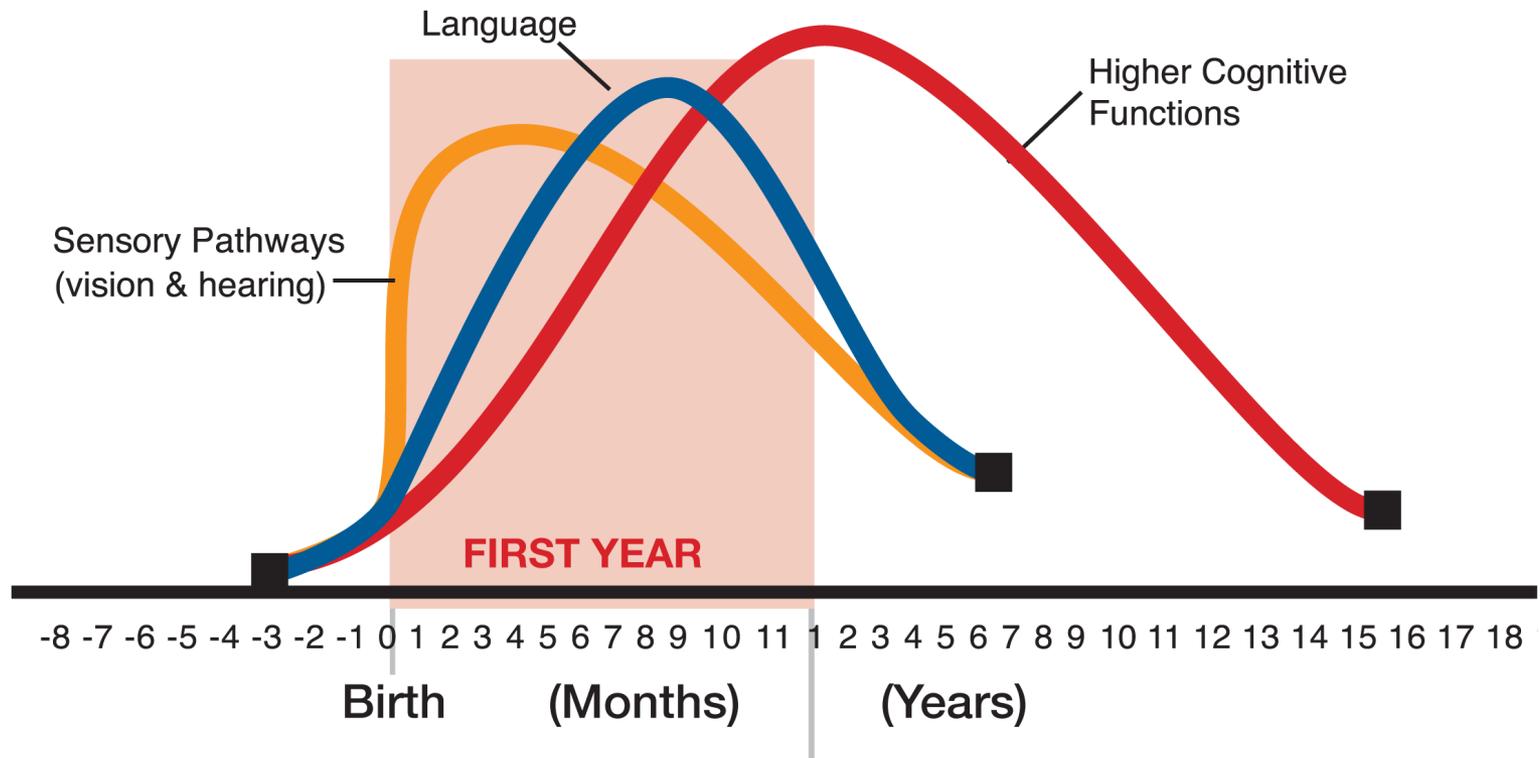


NC House Select Committee on Education Strategy and Practices

Cindy Watkins, President of The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.
February 24, 2016

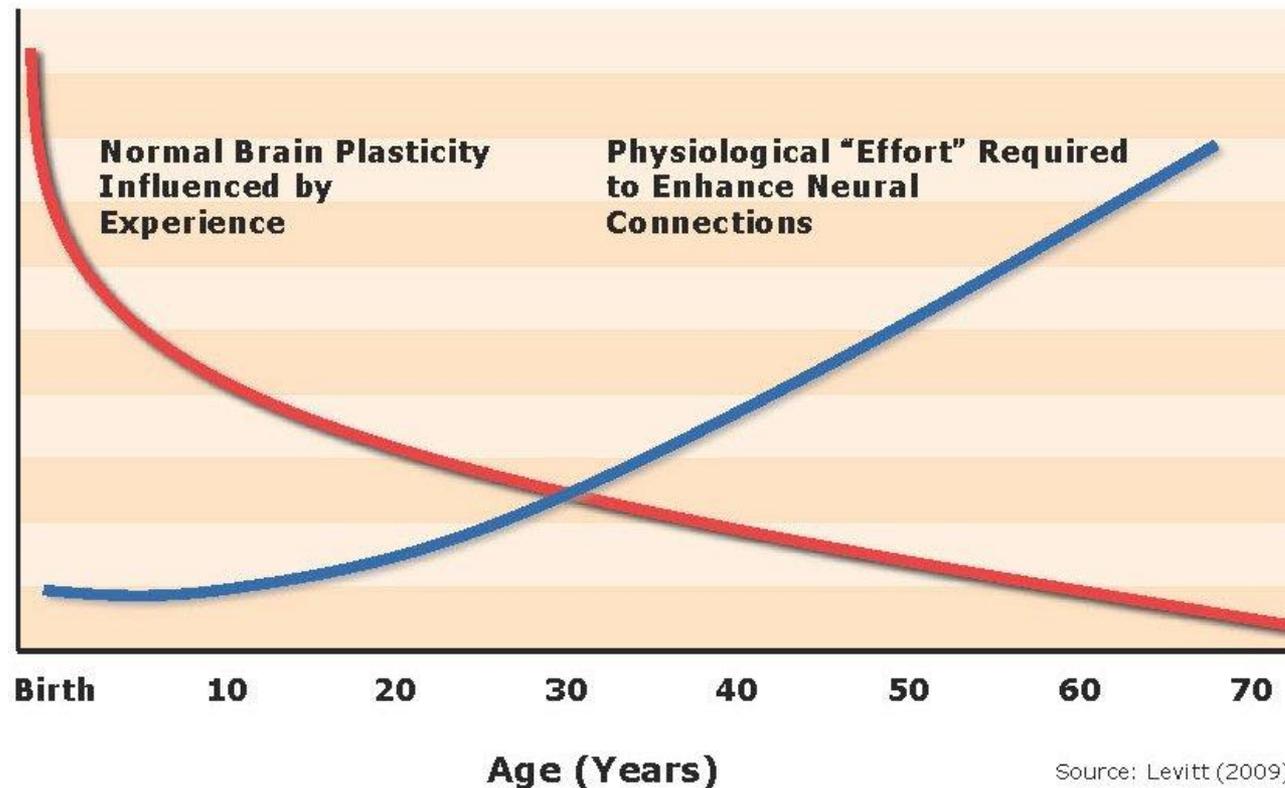
Setting a Strong Foundation

700 Synapses Formed per Second in the Early Years



Setting a Strong Foundation

The Ability to Change Brains Decreases Over Time



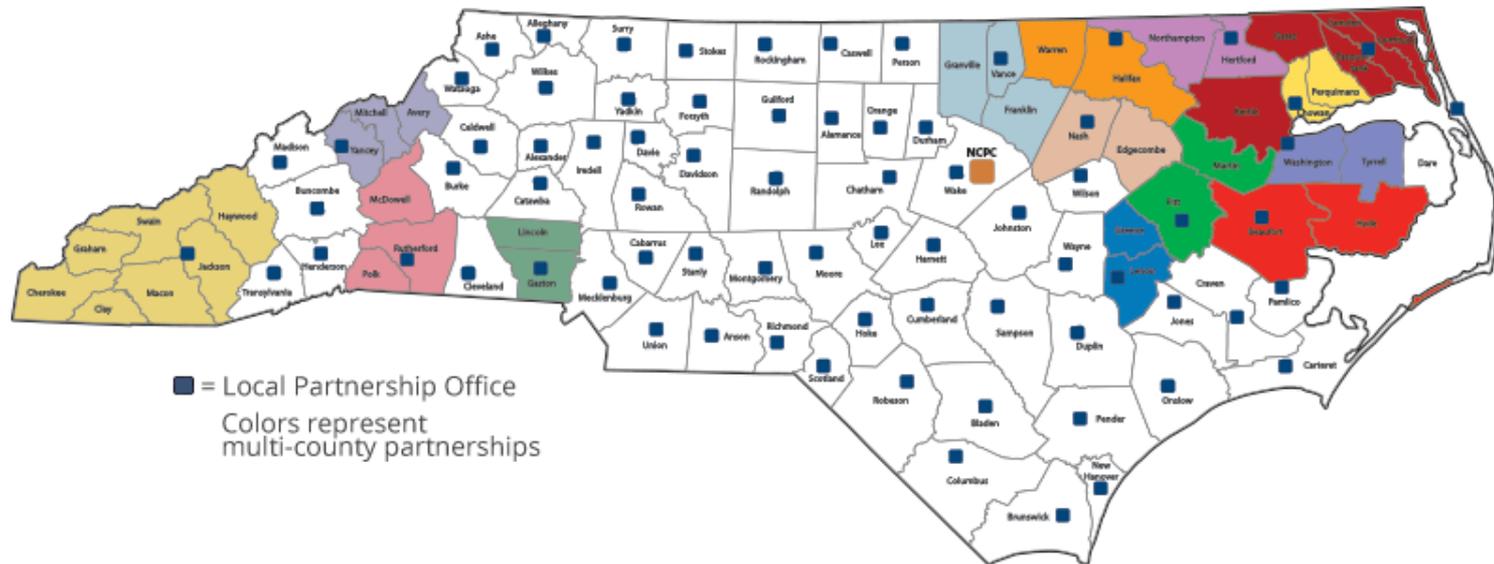
For optimal development and a strong foundation, children need:

- Good health
- Strong families
- High quality early learning and school experiences

- A child's early years set the foundation.
- Adverse experiences disrupt development.
- Soft skills are for success in school, work, and life.

Smart Start is a nationally recognized leader in early childhood and healthy development.

The Smart Start network provides expertise, guidance and infrastructure to ensure NC children receive the care and nurturing they need to thrive.



- 75 nonprofit local partnerships
- Led by the North Carolina Partnership for Children

Tailored to meet the specific needs of each community, Smart Start invests in:

- Early care and education
- Family Support
- Health and Development
- Early Literacy

Children are ready to succeed, lead productive lives, and contribute to a vibrant NC.

Whole Child Approach for a Strong Foundation

- Early care and education
 - Raising the Star Ratings
 - A Value Add to Subsidy
 - Infrastructure Support for Pre-K
- Family Support
 - Parent education
 - Links to community resources

Whole Child Approach for a Strong Foundation

- Health and Development
 - Early childhood nutrition, physical activity, and outdoor learning
 - Developmental screenings
- Early Literacy
 - Books for children
 - Education for parents

Outcomes of Whole Child Approach

- Children in 4 and 5 star programs increased from 33% in 2001 to 75% in 2015.
- Children in low quality, 1 and 2 star programs decreased from 46% in 2001 to 3% in 2015.
- 86% of families participating in Parents As Teachers were linked to community resources.

Outcomes of Whole Child Approach

- Shape NC is serving nearly 150 child care centers across the state.
 - Using Body Mass Index (BMI), children that attended Shape NC centers for more than 6 months are much less likely to be obese (9.6%) than children attending for less than 6 months (15.6%).
- Families participating in Reach Out and Read are significantly more likely to read to their child every day.
 - Over 45,000 children are participating

The Smart Start Impact

Duke University Study

- 3rd graders had higher standardized reading and math scores in counties that received more funding
- Combined effect of Smart Start and NC PreK was 4 months of reading and 2 months of math instruction.
- These gains represent a value of \$1700 to \$3400 per child in instruction costs.
 - \$8,500 state spending per student on elementary education per year
- 3rd graders in counties with more Smart Start funding were less likely to be placed in special education.

The Smart Start Impact

Upjohn Institute

Just considering the boost in third grade test scores alone, this analysis predicts a **1.6% increase in average earnings** in the county once these children enter the workforce.

- Significant over the course of a career
- Impressive given the annual investment of an average \$220 per child in their first five years

A Foundation for Education

- Academic success of children in later years depends heavily upon their kindergarten readiness.
- Solid foundation from which children can adapt to school systems and learn successfully.



Questions?